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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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State Engineer issues order protecting groundwater and existing domestic wells in Pahrump Basin

CARSON CITY, Nev. – The State Engineer has issued Order #1293, requiring the dedication of a water right to drill new domestic wells in the Pahrump Artesian Basin. Order #1293 does not apply to the rehabilitation or re-drilling of an existing domestic well.

The Pahrump Artesian Basin is severely over-appropriated. With an estimated perennial yield of 20,000 acre-feet, existing water rights and existing domestic wells have the potential to withdraw up to 70,000 acre-feet annually. Order #1293 helps protect existing water rights and existing domestic wells in the Pahrump Basin, which has the highest concentration of domestic wells in the state.

In addition to existing domestic wells, there are approximately 8,000 undeveloped parcels of land in the Pahrump basin, each of which currently has the potential to drill a new domestic well and use up to 2 acre-feet annually without a water right. This would further deplete the basin by 16,000 acre-feet annually. By requiring water rights for new domestic wells, Order #1293 helps protect the continued supply of groundwater within the basin, including for existing domestic wells.

Pursuant to NRS 534.110(8), the State Engineer is authorized to restrict the drilling of wells in any basin if it is determined that additional wells would cause an undue interference with existing wells. Order #1293 can be found at <http://water.nv.gov/documents/1293o.pdf>.